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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JULY 23, 2004

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**FEDERAL JURY CONVICTS LEADER OF CRACK COCAINE  
ORGANIZATION OF MURDER, DRUG DEALING AND FIREARM USE**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today the conviction of ANDREW LANG, a/k/a "Drew," a/k/a "Germaine" -- the leader of a major crack cocaine organization in the Hunts Point neighborhood of the Bronx, New York -- of murder, narcotics trafficking, and the use of a firearm. The verdict was returned by a jury today after a three-week trial before United States District Judge SHIRA A. SCHEINDLIN in Manhattan federal court.

The murder conviction stemmed from the November 17, 1997, slaying of Jesus Fornes, a/k/a "Chuito," a rival gang member in the Bronx. According to the evidence at trial, Fornes was murdered in a desolate industrial area in the South Bronx after being kidnaped by men posing as New York City Police Officers.

The jury also convicted LANG, 29, of participating in a conspiracy to distribute large quantities of crack cocaine in the Bronx from 1995 to 2001, as well as the intentional murder of

Fornes and the use of a firearm in Fornes' murder. The evidence showed that LANG and his organization distributed large amounts of crack cocaine on a regular basis for more than five years and at three different locations in the Hunts Point neighborhood. LANG purchased cocaine and crack cocaine primarily in the Washington Heights neighborhood in Manhattan, and often transported it to his drug spots in the Bronx in the gas tank of his vehicles. The evidence at trial showed that LANG and his organization used firearms and violence to protect LANG's lucrative drug dealing business.

On November 17, 1997, LANG and others murdered Fornes using LANG's .38 caliber firearm. Prior to the murder, an associated drug organization headed by Ray Anthony Ramirez had a dispute with Fornes over control of a drug dealing location in the Bronx. At the time, LANG and Ramirez had a partnership to sell drugs at the same location. According to the evidence at trial, as a result of this dispute, LANG and Ramirez hired Michael Sereika to abduct Fornes. On November 17, 1997, individuals posing as police officers hooded, handcuffed and abducted Fornes from 95th Street and 3rd Avenue in Manhattan, and took him to a pre-arranged location in the Bronx. LANG and members of his and Ramirez's gangs arrived at this location and took Fornes to 132nd Street and Willow Avenue in the Bronx. At that location, Fornes, while still handcuffed and pleading for his life, was shot several times in the body and head by another

gang member, using the .38 caliber revolver provided by LANG.

Fornes died shortly thereafter at Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx.

The evidence at trial showed that shortly after Fornes' murder, LANG, Sereika and a member of LANG's organization took a vacation to Puerto Rico.

Ramirez previously pled guilty to narcotics trafficking and the murders of two rival gang members, including Fornes, and was sentenced to 48 years in prison. Michael Sereika pled guilty to conspiracy to kidnap and murder Fornes and other charges and was sentenced to 23 years in prison. Other members of LANG and Ramirez's drug organizations have also pled guilty to narcotics trafficking and murder in connection with their role in Fornes' murder.

The jury acquitted LANG of participating in a second drug-related murder on October 11, 1995.

Sentencing for LANG is currently scheduled for October 25, 2004, before Judge SCHEINDLIN. He faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and a mandatory minimum sentence of 30 years in prison.

Mr. KELLEY praised the outstanding investigative efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the New York City Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorneys HARRY SANDICK and JOSHUA A. GOLDBERG are in charge of the prosecution.

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